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Capable CIA Chief

Despite some breast-beating on the part of a few members of the Senate, George Bush was confirmed as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, as expected. The vote was 64 to 27.

But the spectre of political influence was raised over President Ford's appointment of Bush, former Republican National Chairman, on the basis that "politics" would further jeopardize public confidence in the intelligence community.

This argument was not bought by the Senate as a whole. Even Bush's opposition praised him for his honesty, integrity and a distinguished career as a congressman from Texas, ambassador to the United Nations and as the U.S. liaison to the People's Republic of China.

It was his chairmanship of the Republican National Committee that drew fire, opponents claiming the public would be suspicious of the potential for political abuse of the CIA by a director who once headed a political party.

It is difficult to understand — in view of the praise even from his opponents — why Bush's nomination drew the flack it did. An honest man is an honest man. In Bush's case, his background had nothing in it to indicate he would act any differently in the CIA post than he had in his other federal assignments. Yet the issue of suspicion was thrown into the proceedings.

As far as we're concerned, Bush's record shows he's a capable man. We're confident he will be an efficient and equally capable head of the CIA.